

LOCAL WISDOM OF *BADONCEK* AS ORAL TRADITION IN PARIAMAN WEDDING CEREMONY

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Abstract

Badoncek is a type of oral tradition that is inherited in Pariaman community, in West Sumatra. The term *badoncek* is a fundraising activity conducted by relatives and local community at a wedding ceremony. This paper is concerned with an oral tradition called *Badoncek* program which is usually performed at night after the invited guests of a wedding party have gone home. In this study, 20 informants of Pariaman community were interviewed in two different locations, that is at Pasar Sukaramai, Medan and Naras Hilir village in Pariaman district. These interviews generated a total of 6 forms of local wisdom in *badoncek* ceremony and 5 forms of its weaknesses which were then recorded, transcribed, and documented. This research used in-depth interview and focussed on group discussion. The focus of discussion was on finding the forms of local wisdom and the weakness of the oral tradition of *badoncek*. These forms of weakness were analyzed based on interpretation and comparison methods. It was found that the concept *Barek samo dipikua jikok ringan samo dijinjiang* 'A heavy problem is to be lifted together, and a light problem is also to be carried together' was implemented through *badoncek* tradition. The six forms of local wisdom of *badoncek* were mutual cooperation, harmony, deliberation and consensus, mutual help, openness, and entertainment. The five forms of weaknesses of *badoncek* were an old tradition, lack of socialization, lack of parents' role in motivating young generation, lack of knowledge about oral tradition, and lack of empathy to contribute. A number of attempts have been made to preserve *badoncek* tradition by approaching the local government, custom leaders in Pariaman District, and Pariaman community associations. *Badoncek* tradition could also be applied to raise funds in order to support various programs of the local government.

Keywords: *badoncek*, local wisdom, oral tradition, consensus, deliberation, mutual help, custom leaders.

1. Introduction

Indonesia has more than seven hundred ethnic groups and customs. One of them is Pariaman, a sub-ethnic group of Minangkabau, in West Sumatra Province, Indonesia. This tribe has a matrilineal system in which the bloodline comes from the mother. Related to this matrilineal system, Pariaman marriage custom has its own ways in which the bride bears all

the costs of the wedding party. To overcome the party costs, all the close relatives of the bride give contribution to the family by collecting funds in a unique system known as *badoncek* 'fund-raising' at the end of the wedding ceremony. After all invited guests have returned home, the *badoncek* team consisting of an MC called *canang* and some members start preparing the *badoncek* activities.

This study aims to find the forms of local wisdom of *badoncek* and its existence in Pariaman community today. The term *badoncek* refers to a tradition which is held at a wedding party of Pariaman sub-ethnic group of Minangkabau of West Sumatra. Other terms related to *badoncek* are *baretong*, *barantam*, and *badantam*. The term *baretong* is used in the Northern Pariaman sub-district (Marlina, 2009), *badantam* in the East Pariaman sub-district (Wita, 2018), and *barantam* in the southern Pariaman sub-district (Fiftina, 1995). These researchers discussed the *badoncek* tradition in three different sub-districts in Pariaman District namely Northern Pariaman, East Pariaman, and Southern Pariaman. In general, there is no difference in the performance of *badoncek* tradition in the three sub-districts; each sub-district uses its own term in the implementation of the *badoncek* tradition. This study focuses more on the forms of local wisdom found in the *badoncek* tradition and the efforts to preserve it.

A number of researches that lead to oral tradition and local wisdom in Pariaman community have been widely conducted. Malik (2013) discovered the role of *Sosoh* music at the *tabuik* ceremony in Pariaman. The Local wisdom found in the *Sosoh* music performance is the survival attitude when there is a battle between two *tabuik* groups. Faizzati (2015) found that the factors that influence the existence of the *bajapuik* tradition and *uang hilang* in the marriage of the Padang Pariaman community are related to Islamic marriage law. She found some values in *bajapuik* tradition, such as sociological, economic and spiritual values. Yesa (2014) explored symbolic meanings in the Pariaman *tabuik* ceremony, such as meaning before making *tabuik*, meaning in the process of making *tabuik*, and meaning in the top event of *tabuik*. The local wisdoms found in symbolic meanings were struggle, hope and respect values. Utama (2002) found various functions of *uang hilang* in Pariaman marriage customs. The local wisdoms found in his study were the endorsement of social status, the means of social mobility, the principle of reciprocity, and the role and position of women in Pariaman community.

In principle, *badoncek* tradition is a fundraising activity from relatives, nonrelatives, and local communities to lighten the burden of the bride's family. *Badoncek* tradition is only found in Pariaman community, so it becomes the pride and the characteristic of its community. In Pariaman District, *badoncek* tradition is still being maintained. *Badoncek* is a tradition that cannot be separated from a series of marriage ceremonies in the community. This situation is in contrast with those who live in Medan or in other areas. *Badoncek* tradition is hardly found in Medan. It can be predicted that one day such a tradition might be vanished in the indigenous community; in spite of the fact, that in *badoncek* tradition, there are some noble values of local wisdom that have been inherited by the ancestors. *Badoncek* tradition has a deep meaning of life philosophy *Barek samo dipikua, jiko ringan samo dijinjiang*", which means that life must hold the principle of mutual help; any problem heavy or light must be shared together. Further, *badoncek* can be applied to support the government programme. Fundraising from local community can be used for repairing mosque, natural disaster, orphanage aids, repairing village road, and so forth. Although *Badoncek* tradition is held openly and tends to compete with one another, it is not regarded as a show-off.

2. Literature Review

Local wisdom is a tradition or value that has been conventional in a community which is passed down from one generation to another. Local wisdom can also be defined as local cultural values that can be used to regulate people's lives wisely. Local wisdom studies on oral traditions have already been done in various perspectives. Roikhwanthut (2012) discussed about knowledge and local wisdom of Thai people in facing problems caused by development. She found Thai traditional communities still have enough knowledge to rely more on their own knowledge, on their own ways, and on nature. They live peacefully, help one another and share many things together. These noble values will continue to be preserved and if possible such values can be combined with knowledge that comes from outside. Tambas (2017) found a community who have local wisdom related to fishing tradition inherited from their ancestors by using old equipments and traditional ways but the fishing process can be done successfully. This tradition contains forms of local wisdom such as sense of solidarity, mutual help, and survival.

Oral traditions, according to Vansina (1965), are all oral testimonies which are transmitted from one person to another. Further, she defined oral tradition as a kind of direct and indirect testimonies. Direct testimony refers to all verbal testimonies that consist of reported statements concerning the past and based on eyewitness processes. Indirect testimony refers to nonverbal testimony based on transmission processes from one generation to another. Pudentia (2015) defines oral tradition as spoken discourses, including literary or non-literary discourse system. Sibarani (2015) divides three important aspects of oral tradition: (1) forms of oral tradition concerning the text, context, and co-text, (2) content of verbal tradition covering meaning and functions, values and norms, and local wisdom, and (3) revitalization and preservation of verbal tradition covering activation or protection, management and development, and inheritance and benefit. D.A. Swanson (2008) found a connection between oral tradition and geological studies. The data obtained from the oral record about 400 years of eruptive activity at Kīlauea are almost the same as those obtained from modern research. Blackhawk (1990) notes that language teaching by using an oral tradition approach such as storytelling is considered more effective than that by writing style. This approach is also considered effective to sharpen students' thinking and their sense of audience's perspective.

3. Research Method

This study belongs to a field research as the data were obtained from Padang Pariaman informants who lived in Padang Pariaman District and Medan city. The data were collected by applying techniques known as in-depth interview and focus group discussion (Sugiyono, 2013). In-depth interview was conducted through interviews with the informants one by one to get detailed and in-depth information. Focus group discussion method was conducted by collecting all the informants both in Medan and in Pariaman district separately to discuss about the research subject. Discussion activities were then recorded, transcribed, and documented. Twenty key informants have been selected, who really understand the customs of Pariaman community. The findings obtained from them are based on their own experience so that they are empirically considered valid. Their identity is also kept secret and only labelled as informant 1, informant 2 and so on.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 *Badoncek* Term

Badoncek comes from the word *doncek* which means 'jump' or 'throw'. It refers to an activity of fundraising by collecting money from some relatives in a wedding party by throwing it on the table. *Badoncek* performance usually starts after Muslim evening prayer called *sholat Isya* at 8.00 p.m. It is held on a stage in which *badoncek* team and the bride's close relatives sit together. All equipments to support the activity are prepared in advance such as microphones, books, pens, calculator, a handbag, snacks and cigarettes.

Here are the steps of *badoncek* performance:

1. The arrival of *badoncek* team consisting of an MC called *canang* and custom leaders from the local people.
2. The *canang* invites the host of the party and some of his close relatives to go onstage.
3. The opening words from the party host and the *badoncek* team.
4. A box containing money from the party guests is placed in the middle and opened by the *badoncek* team.
5. The *badoncek* team counts the money in the box and records it.
6. The *canang* announces the amount of money obtained from the party guests.
7. The *canang* then stands up to start the *badoncek* activity. Contributors consisting of the bride close relatives and the local community come close to him with money in their hand.
8. The *canang* announces the contributor's name one by one and the amount of money given until no one else contributes.
9. The *badoncek* team counts and records the amount of money collected and it must be witnessed by all the participants.
10. The *canang* announces the total money collected from the party guests and the *badoncek* participants.
11. The *badoncek* team then put the money in a bag and hand it to the host of the party.
12. Closing words from the *badoncek* team and the party host.
13. Having dinner together with the *badoncek* team and the bride relatives.

The *badoncek* committee generally consist of *ninik mamak* 'uncles and aunties', youth chairman, and representatives from the local VIPs. The committee are chosen based on deliberation and consensus of local custom leaders. Every *badoncek* activity around the area must be carried out by the appointed committee. Every area has its own *badoncek* committee.

In the *badoncek* activity donations are announced openly and witnessed by the *badoncek* participants. The amount of funds collected depends on the role of the MC (*canang*). The term *canang* refers to someone who is very adept at playing words to attract attention of the audience. The MC becomes the centre of attention in the activity. He must be able to attract the attention, feelings and emotions of the audience in order to motivate them to contribute more so that the funds required can meet the expectation. Because *badoncek* is usually held at night, the only guests who are present are close relatives and local communities. At that time persuasion and seduction by the MC aim at those remaining guests. The amount of donation depends on the social status of the bride's family. The higher the status in a community is, the more money will be collected. Through *badoncek* tradition the prestige of the family in the community can be seen. The principle of togetherness and kinship in *badoncek* activity is conducted voluntarily and openly by the

community in the village or from outside the village. Donations are given in the form of money or material according to the needs. If a contributor is not present in the program, he usually puts the donation in an envelope and sends it to the committee, and it is usually called *masuk angin* 'catching cold', which means he did not enjoy the party meal at that time.

Here is an example of *badoncek* ceremony:

The opening words by the *canang* 'Master of Ceremony':

"Dek ninik mamak alah duduak kami minta kapado urang pangka, kamudian jourang sumando yang dak kami sabuikkan gala satu persatu kami harapkan dapek duduak kalapiak. Nah kalolai kami sampaikan kapado sidang bapakka, dek karano niniak-mamak alah duduak di lapiak kami mintak dapek yang mewakili atau jourang sumando yang dak kami sabuikkan gala satu persatu yo kami harapkan dapek duduak ka lapiak".

'Because *ninik-mamak* 'uncles and aunties' have already sat, we request the host, and the parents in-law that we cannot mention the title one by one, to sit on the mat. Well then we start the program because *ninik-mamak* 'aunty and uncle' have already been sitting on the mat, we ask the representation or the parents in-law that we do not mention the title one by one, yes we request you to be seated on the mat'.

At this stage, the MC urges *ninik mamak* 'aunty and uncle', host and *sumanda* 'parents in law' to join them on the stage. Furthermore, there is a dialogue in the form of beautiful verse and rhyme or what is called *petatah-petitih* between the host (*sipangka*) and the MC (*canang*), witnessed by other relatives. At the next stage, the MC begins to collect money from the participants, mentioning the name, title, residence and the amount of money given.

The *canang* 'Master of Ceremony' manages the *badoncek* ceremony as the following:

1. *Kemudian dari si upiak di pasia, saratuhih ribu rupiah.* 'Then from a woman *in Pasia* one hundred thousand rupiah.'
2. *Dari Sutan Malim, urang Sumando limo puluah ribu rupiah.* 'From Sutan Malim, the father in-law side, fifty thousand rupiah.'
3. *Dari uncu Malim Jakarta saratuhih ribu rupiah.* 'From Aunty Malim in Jakarta one hundred thousand rupiah.'
4. *Iko ateh namo ipa bisan yang berasal dari Nareh, kamudian yota masuk urang sumando baiak sumando padusi maupun sumando laki-laki sabanyak tujuh ratuih ribu rupiah.* 'This is on behalf of the parents in law from Nareh, then including the *sumando* people both *sumando* from the woman and *sumando* from man, the amount is seven hundred thousand rupiah.'
5. *Ateh namo ipa bisan ko ah nan berasal dari Nareh, tujuh ratuih ribu rupiah. Kemudian ditambah eh dek Sariani, anak minantu ko ah, yo tu Datuak Leman, dari Uni Sariani anak minantu tigo ratuih ribu rupiah, jadi jumlahnya satu juta rupiah.* 'On behalf of brother-in-law and parents-in-law who came from Nareh, seven hundred thousand rupiah; and then added by Sariani, her son in law, that is Datuk Leman from Uni Sariani's daughter in law: three hundred thousand rupiah, so the amount is one million rupiah.'

At this stage, the *canang* 'MC' starts playing his role, encouraging people to contribute more. If the amount of money collected is less than the party budget that has been spent, then the party is called *merugi* 'suffering a loss'. If the amount of money collected is more

than the party budget, it is called *baruntuang* 'getting profit'. If the party still loses, the MC will continue to raise funds through the *badoncek* ceremony being held. At that time, *ninik-mamak* 'aunty and uncle' and close relatives were provoked and persuaded to give more money so that the deficit of the party funds can be covered.

4.2 Forms of Local Wisdom

The results of discussions with a number of informants in Pariaman District and Medan city, there were five forms of local wisdom found:

1. Mutual Help

Badoncek tradition is a representation of attitude of mutual help in Pariaman community. This is in accordance with their life philosophy *Barek samo dipikua, jiko ringan samo dijinjiang* 'Something heavy is to be lifted together and something light is to be carried together.' It means that in this life everybody must have the principle of mutual help; suffering and happiness must be shared together. The activity of *badoncek* 'fundraising' is an implementation of mutual help through donation with full sincerity.

2. Openness

At the time of *badoncek* activity, the MC urges the audience to donate and then he mentions one by one the name and the amount of money that is donated; meanwhile, a secretary must record and count the total amount of money collected. This situation indicates a transparency in fund raising. By mentioning the name and the amount of donations given, the whole family and the audience immediately know the amount of the donation.

3. Harmony

Badoncek activity is usually held at night after the invited guests come home. At that time the whole family members sit together, chatting and cheering in happiness. This situation shows the intimacy of the family. This situation is seen when the *badoncek* supporters chat with relatives who come from the neighbouring areas.

4. Mutual Cooperation

Before *badoncek* activity starts, the whole family members help to prepare places, equipment, and snacks to support the activity. This situation shows the sincerity to give assistance to one another among the relative.

5. Deliberation and Consensus

Before the *badoncek* activity begins, *ninik-mamak* 'aunty and uncle' and close relatives hold a small meeting regarding the budget problem faced by the host of the wedding party and finally the problem is passed to the *badoncek* committee. After the deliberation, some consensus is taken to be conveyed to the committee.

6. Entertainment

Badoncek tradition gives a very special attraction to Pariaman community. This is because the atmosphere is full of fun especially the *canang's* style when in action. The *badoncek* performance is the peak session of the party that is really awaited by Pariaman community.

4.3 The Weaknesses

In spite of the values of the local wisdom of *badoncek*, there were a number of weaknesses in the tradition. These weaknesses are the obstacles that arise both in Pariaman District and Medan city as follows:

1. The lack of socialization

The term *badoncek* is hardly known by Padang Pariaman community especially who live in big cities. In this case, the role of traditional leaders and local government is needed to socialize it. Socialization of *badoncek* tradition is one way to maintain the oral tradition in Minangkabau ethnic group.

2. Considered as an old tradition

In most Pariaman wedding ceremonies especially in big cities, *badoncek* tradition is not held any longer. Pariaman community are more interested in music performance than *badoncek* activity. They claim that *badoncek* tradition is only suitable in the village.

3. Lack of parent role

At the time of *badoncek* activity, most of the audiences consist of people in the elderly age. Parents do not ask their children to join the program. Parents assume that the *badoncek* tradition is only for the elderly or married persons, not for the young.

4. Lack of knowledge about oral tradition culture

The role of the community, government and parents is very important to give the understanding of local culture and insight knowledge to the children so that they can love their own culture more than foreign culture. In the long run, the local culture can be sustained and preserved forever so that it can remain intact.

5. Lack of empathy to contribute

Awareness to preserve local culture seems to be decreasing nowadays. People prefer foreign culture that is considered more trendy or practical. Feelings of empathy to help others are getting worse nowadays especially in urban community. This situation can be seen in *badoncek* tradition which is almost lost and forgotten.

5. Conclusion

The philosophy of the Minangkabau community passed through a proverb *Barek samo dipikua jiko ringan samo dijinjiang* which means that any problems heavy or light must be solved together is implemented in the *badoncek* tradition. Such a tradition is basically meant to help solve the financial problem faced by the bride when holding a wedding party. The role of a *canang* 'Master of Ceremony' is very important in conducting *badoncek* activity. The six forms of local wisdom of *badoncek* were mutual cooperation, harmony, deliberation and consensus, mutual help, openness, and entertainment. The five forms of weaknesses of *badoncek* were an old tradition, lack of socialization, lack of parents' role in motivating the young generation, lack of knowledge about oral tradition, and lack of empathy to contribute.

Badoncek tradition in urban areas is now rare and difficult to find, but in Pariaman District this tradition is still carried out and maintained. *Badocek* tradition must be preserved especially in urban areas; otherwise, this tradition will be abandoned by its own community and finally it may disappear one day. The local government, custom leaders in Pariaman

District, and Pariaman community associations must attempt and take some necessary actions to preserve *badoncek* tradition as it can be applied to raise funds in order to support various programs of the local government as well as social facilities.

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